

Notice of Change in Commission Services to SSI Children

By federal regulations, state Title V/ Children with Special Health Care Needs Programs are mandated to “provide outreach, referral, and rehabilitative services to SSI recipients ages birth to sixteen to the extent that these services are not available under Title XIX (Medicaid)”.

For many years, the Commission administered the SSI/Disabled Children’s Program (DCP) that provided a broad array of early intervention support and medically necessary services to SSI recipient children ages birth through three. The Commission has also provided medical services to older SSI children through our clinical programs. The incorporation of First Steps as a Commission program provides another opportunity for the Commission to identify and serve children who may qualify for SSI. The merger with First Steps also provides an opportunity to identify and eliminate areas of duplication of effort and costs in programs.

The Commission is in the process of promulgating a regulation to revise the provision of services to SSI eligible children ages birth to sixteen. A new program (SSI/Children’s Support Services-SSI/CSS) will be established to provide only medically necessary items and services that are not available under Medicaid for disabled children birth to age 16 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. While budgetary constraints now prohibit the provision of educational toys and materials that were provided under DCP, the new program does expand outreach to older SSI children and will place priority on meeting critical medical needs that cannot be provided under other programs.

Efforts have been made to make this change with minimal impact to families of children with existing DCP plans. DCP began approving medically necessary services only in February 2002. Families in the existing DCP program have received notice of the program change; and those with service plans in effect when the program closed in June 2002 will continue to receive those services as approved. Upon completion of DCP services, families may apply for only medically necessary services under the new SSI/CSS program that is expected to become available in the fall of 2002.

SSI/CSS services will be limited to \$500 maximum per child annually and will be provided on a first come first served basis until annually budgeted funds have been exhausted. Federal law requires that the Social Security Administration transmit notification to the state Title V/CSHCN program of children who are determined eligible for SSI. Under the new program, upon receipt of this notification, the Commission will contact families by letter to provide resource information including guidelines for the SSI/CSS program. Families will be able to contact either their local Commission office or the state SSI/CSS coordinator to request an application for SSI/CSS. A physician or nurse practitioner must recommend all items/services provided through SSI/CSS. An example of an item that would be provided under SSI/CSS is an air conditioner for a child with chronic lung or heart disease. Requests for services will be reviewed by the state coordinator and services will be purchased or provided through the Commission office nearest the child’s home. If a service is denied, the family will receive a letter of explanation including information on their right to an appeal.

An announcement of the opening of the new SSI/CSS program will be posted on this website.